

THE

## Arminian Magazine,

For' JUNE 1789.



*The Examination of TILÉNUS before the Triers; in order to his intended Settlement in the Office of a Public Preacher in the Commonwealth of Eutopia.*

[Wrote by one who was present at the Synod of Dort.]

[Concluded from page 210.]

Mr. Simulans. **S**EEING it hath pleased GOD to keep his immutable decrees, as well that of *reprobation*, as that of *election*, locked up in the secret cabinet of his own unsearchable counsel, we are to govern our judgment by the *rule of charity*, which *believeth all things, and hopeth all things*, 1 Cor. xiii.

*Tilenus Tentatus.* It is not the *judgment of my charity*, but the *certainty of my faith*, that must give me comfort in this particular. The *judgment of charity* is a good standing measure betwixt man and man : but it is not current betwixt man and his own conscience ; much less betwixt him and GOD. If Christ died only for a *few* particular persons, and all the promises made in him, belong to those *few* only ! unless I could find some mention of my name amongst them, or receive some *revelation* from heaven to that effect, how can I with any certainty build my faith upon it, that I am one of them ?

Mr. Take-o'-Trust. We are bound to think every one is of the number of the *elect*, till it appears to the contrary.

*Tilenus*

*Tilenus Tentatus.* I am beholden to you, that, waving the severity of your reason, you will make use of a charitable supposition to flatter me into an opinion, that I am one of that *little flock* for which Christ died. But there is nothing can comfort me, but a full and certain persuasion, that I am one of them; which you will never be able to work in me, unless you can find some particular and undeniable evidence of my interest in him.

*Mr. Indefectible.* You should reflect upon your former experience of GOD's gracious work in you. That spirit of adoption sent out into the hearts of GOD's elect, *to bear witness to their spirits*; though he may become *silent*, and not speak peace to them in such an audible language of comfort, yet *he abides with them for ever*.

*Tilenus Tentatus.* Some comfortable apprehensions might be kindled in these bosoms that have been warmed with heavenly experiencies, if they were not all overcast and darkened again by other black clouds, which some of your greatest *divines* have spread over them. For *Mr. Calvin* (*Inst. lib. iii. cap. 2. §. 10, 11.*) saith, "That the heart of man hath  
"so many starting holes, and secret corners of vanity and  
"lying, and is cloathed with so many colours of guileful  
"hypocrisy, that it oftentimes deceiveth itself: and besides,  
"experience sheweth, that the reprobates are sometimes  
"moyed with the same feelings that the elect are, so that in  
"their own judgment they nothing differ from the elect."

*Mr. Know-little.* You are to consider that all the *elect* are not called at the same hour.

*Tilenus Tentatus.* I should not stand upon the hour; I could be content that GOD may take his own time to call me, if you could, in order to my present comfort, insure me, that I shall be called, though it be but at the hour of death: but this is that, I am afraid you have no grounds for.

*Mr. Take-o'Trust.* You may be confident, that Christ died for you, and that you have an interest in him, if you can believe it.

*Tilenus Tentatus.* I would desire to ask but these two questions. 1. Whether this comfort be applicable to all and every

every sick and afflicted person? And, 2. Whether it be grounded upon the truth? For if it be not to be applied unto all, I may be amongst the excepted persons, and so am not concerned in it; or, if it be not grounded upon the truth, you offer me a delusion instead of comfort.

Mr. *Take-o'Trust*. It is applicable unto all, and every one, and grounded upon the unquestionable truth of the holy gospel.

*Tilenus Tentatus*. If it be applicable to all, and every one, and grounded upon the truth; that is, as I conceive, a truth *antecedent* to their believing; then it follows undeniably, that Christ died for all in general, and for every one in special; (else how can the comfort of this doctrine be so applied to them, as you would have it?) But if your meaning be, that it will become true to me, or any other person, [*that Christ died for us,*] by that *act* of faith which you would have me or any such other person, give unto your speeches; then you run into a manifest absurdity, maintaining, that the *object* of faith, or the thing proposed to be believed, doth receive its *truth* from the *act* of the believer, and depend upon his consent; whose faith can no more make true, that which in itself is false, than make false by his unbelief, that which in itself is true. Well may the *infidel* deprive himself of the fruit of Christ's death; but he cannot bring to pass, by his unbelief, that he hath not suffered it, as a proof of his love to mankind. On the other side, the believer may receive benefit from the death of Christ, but his act of faith doth not effect, but necessarily suppose that death as suffered for him, before it can be exercised about it or lay hold upon it. Nay, my believing is so far from procuring Christ's death for me, that, on the contrary, our great divines do maintain, That I cannot have faith, unless it be procured for me by the merits and death of Christ. And because I cannot find this faith in me, I may conclude he hath not procured it for me, and consequently that he hath not died for me; and this is the ground of all my trouble.

Dr.



*Dr. Dubious.* Sir, I wish you would take heed of that *evil heart of unbelief*, as the apostle calls it, *Heb. iii.* and to that end remember the words recorded, *John iii. ult.* *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of GOD abideth on him.*

*Tilenus Tentatus.* Sir, instead of lending me a clew to guide me out of that maze of difficulties, into which the prodigious *divinity* of the *synod* hath led me, you entangle me much more in it. For whereas the apostle saith, that *GOD sends strong delusions to such as will not receive the love of the truth that they may be saved*; you would first persuade men to believe a false proposition, (when you exhort every man to believe, that Christ died for him, which is false according to that *doctrine*) and then having believed this falshood, they are punished by the spirit of error, and made to believe a lie. I beseech you, which way would you have me turn myself, to get out of these perplexities, having instructed me to believe a doctrine, that turns my obedience into punishment, and makes my following the truth (according to that calculation) the sure way to aggravate my damnation? For if the *synod* saith true, and Christ died not for them that believe not in him, how do they deserve to be punished for not believing that which is false? And those that do obey the commandment, and believe in his death, (though but for a time,) why suffer they the punishments due only to the refractory and incredulous.

*Mr. Know-little.* Sir, you must not think to beguile us with your *vain philosophy*: we are too well established in these saving truths, to be perverted by such *sophistry*.

*Tilenus.* If you have no better *cordials* for afflicted consciences nor firmer props to support the necessity of your ministry, than these, the most vulgar capacities will conclude from the premises, that your office is altogether useless. Laying aside therefore the person of the *Infidel*, *Carnal*, *Tepid*, and *Afflicted*, whose parts I have hitherto acted, to make a practical trial of the efficacy of your ministry upon them, I beseech you to reflect upon what hath already  
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passed betwixt us; and consider further, what a spirit presided in that *synod*, that led those *divines* (maugre all the reason to the contrary) to deny some things which the scripture expressly affirms, and to affirm other things, which the scripture as expressly denies. They deny *the universality of the merits of Christ's death*, (which the scripture abundantly proclaimeth) and yet they enjoin all men, upon peril of damnation, to believe in him; as if the *Author* of all truth did not only allow, but also command some men to believe falsehood. They exhort every one to believe, *that he is elected to salvation*, (though indeed he be a very reprobate,) and that he *cannot lose faith and grace* once received, which the scripture in express terms denieth. And as the denial of Christ's universal redemption takes away all the solid ground of comfort; so the asserting the saints' indefectibility overthrows the necessity of exhortation, with the usefulness of promises and threatenings to enforce it: for who will value such admonitions, [*Harden not your hearts—Take heed lest ye fall—Receive not the grace of GOD in vain—*] when he is instructed to believe, that he can never be so far wanting to the grace of GOD, nor harden his heart, nor fall from his standing, so far as to endanger his salvation? And who will deny himself the present satisfaction of his lusts and passions, for the reversion of a kingdom, who is persuaded, there are several decrees past in heaven, as well to necessitate, as secure him in the enjoyment of them both? And who will be frightened from the pleasures of sin, with the threatened danger of damnation, who believes it is no more possible to happen to him, than for GOD to lie, or his immutable decrees to be rescinded? In brief, when we consider the consequences of that doctrine, that the absolute decrees of heaven do not only *over-rule*, but also *predetermine* every individual action of mankind, (so that it is impossible for the endeavours and wit of man, to make any one of them happen at any other time, or after any other manner than they do) may we not conclude, that it is GOD's fault, that so many men prove *infidels*, and *profane, lukewarm* and *desperate*; because it is *he* that doth withhold

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that grace, which is absolutely necessary to work an effectual change in them ? And resolve, that it were therefore fit, that all preachers (forbearing to importune the weak creature to attempt any of those mere impossibilities) should direct their admonitions to GOD alone, that he would (perform what is his work only, that is,) *convert, correct, provoke and comfort* them, by such an *invincible* arm of efficiency as cannot be resisted ?

The benefit of the word preached being thus totally evacuated by these doctrines, we shall find no more use or comfort in the sacraments, but so far as we can observe, the very same ministers, in the very administration of them, to overthrow their own doctrine. For to every one they *baptize*, they apply the promises of the covenant of grace, contrary to their own tenet, which is, that they belong not at all to the reprobates. Likewise the *Lord's supper* is given to all, with the assurance Christ died *for all* them that receive it, though their own tenet is, that he no way died for them who receive it *unworthily*, and to their condemnation; whose number is not small among our reformed congregations, even by their own confession. What more ? The very exercises of prayer, wherein the pastor and the flock are joint petitioners, shall be found of no use or comfort unto either, since they all are either elect or reprobate; for the *elect* obtain no new thing by this means, if GOD hath written them (as the synod says) from all eternity in the book of life, without any relation to, or consideration of, their faith and prayers; and if it is impossible they should be blotted out of it. And the reprobates can never cause themselves to be enrolled therein by any exercises of faith or prayers, any more than they are able to disannul the immutable decree of GOD.

Gentlemen, I shall trouble you no further, but only to desire you to ponder those many prejudices that lie against such a religion, as is rather repugnant than operative to the conversion of an infidel, the correction of the carnal, the quickening of the careless, and the consolation of the afflicted. And if the doctrine delivered by the divines of  
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that synod doth frustrate the preaching of the word, the use of the sacraments, and the exercise of prayer, if it overthrows the sacred function of the ministry, (which consists in the faithful administration of wholesome doctrine and good discipline) and gives such a total defeat to the whole design of the divine ordinances; I hope you will, out of your great piety and prudence, not think it reasonable, to make the profession of such faith or doctrine your *Shiboleth*, to discern your examinants, and pass them in the account of the godly ministers.

Dr. *Absolute*.

Mr. *Fatality*.

Mr. *Fry-babe*.

} Withdraw, withdraw, withdraw.

Dr. *Absolute*. Brethren, what think you of this man, now you have heard him discover himself so fully?

Mr. *Fatality*. The man hath a competent measure of your ordinary unsanctified learning. But you may say, he hath studied the ancient fathers, more than Mr. *Calvin* and Mr. *Perkins*: and alas! they threw away their enjoyments, and their lives too, some of them, for they knew not what; they understood little or nothing of the divine decrees, or the power of grace and godliness. This great light was reserved for the honour of after ages.

Mr. *Efficax*. He may be an honest moral man; but I cannot perceive that he hath been much acquainted with sin, or sensible of the nature of repentance. I confess, for my own part, I was never much taken with these *Obadiahs*, that cry, *I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth* [1 Kings xviii. 12.] Give me your experimental divines. The burnt child will dread the fire: and as *Jude* adviseth, *will have compassion upon their brethren, and will save them with fear*, using a holy violence to *pluck them out of the burning*. I remember Mr. *Calvin* confesseth, in an epistle to *Bucer*, "that he had a great conflict with that wild beast of impatience that raged in him, and that it was not yet tamed." He would frequently reproach his brethren (especially if they dissented from him in the matter of predestination) by the name of knave, and dog, and satan. And he so vexed the



spirit of *Bucer*, that he provoked the good mild man to write thus to him: *Judicas prout amas, vel odisti: amas autem vel odisti, prout libet.* That his judgment was governed by his passions of love and hatred, and these by his lust. And for his bitter speeches, *Bucer* gave him the title of a fratricide. The reverend *Beza* confelleth also of himself, "That for the space of fifteen years together, wherein he taught others the ways of righteousness, himself trod neither in the way of truth, nor bounty, nor sobriety; but stuck fast in the mire [of sin.]" Men that have had trial of the powerful workings of sin and grace, and been brought upon their knees (like the great apostle) with a bitter complaint, O wretched man that I am! these are your divines!

*Dr. Absolute.* Have any of you any more objections against him?

*Mr. Indefectible.* He holds the possibility of the saints apostacy, notwithstanding the decrees and promises of GOD to the contrary, and concludes *David's* adultery and murder to be wilful wasting, deadly sins, and inconsistent with the state of regeneration: so that should a *godly man* through the frailty of the flesh suffer the like infirmity, he would be ready to discourage and grieve his spirit, telling him he had forfeited his interest in GOD's favour.

*Mr. Narrow-grace.* What was worse than that, he flouted the *divines* of the *synod*; saying, if their doctrine were well improved, it would prove an *antidote* against the power of *death*, and teach a man how to become immortal, even in this life. He said, if the elect cannot be cut off in the state of impenitency, notwithstanding they fall into most grievous sins; then let them but abandon themselves to some horrid lust, or course of impiety, and they shall be sure to be immortal.

*Chairman.* Gentlemen, what say you to *Mr. Tilenus*? Do you approve of him as a man fitly qualified for the ministry?

*Mr. Fatality.*

*Mr. Preterition.*

*Mr. Indefectible.*

and the rest.

No, by no means do we like his principles.

Call

*Call him in.*

*Chairman.* Sir, the *commissioners* are not satisfied with your *certificate*. You may be a godly man, we do not deny; but we have not such assurance of it, as we can build upon, and therefore we cannot approve of you for the ministry; and that you may be at no more expence of purse or time in your attendance, we wish you to return home, and think upon some other employment.

*Tilenus.* Sir, I could wish I might be acquainted with the reason of this my *reprobation*, unless the *decree* that governs your *votes* or proceeds from them, be *irrespective*. I think, I am not so ill beloved amongst the most learned of the *godly* clergy, (though differing a little in judgment from me) but I can procure a full *certificate* from the *chief* and most *moderate* of them.

*Chairman.* That is not all the matter we have against you; what have we to do with moderate men? We see your temper and want of modesty in that expression, and therefore you may be gone.

*Tilenus.* Then, *gentlemen*, I shall take my leave, and commend you to more sober counsels and resolutions.

[*End of the Examination of Tilenus.*]

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A DISCOURSE concerning the NECESSITY and CONTINGENCY of EVENTS in the WORLD, in respect of GOD's ETERNAL DECREES.

By THOMAS GOAD, D. D.

[*Wrote about the Year 1620.*]

To the READER,

Christian Reader,

THIS piece was the only remain of that reverend divine, whose name is prefixed to it. It came to my hands by buying some of the books of his deceased amanuensis. I need make

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*no encomium either of the author, or the work ; the one was very well known to, and is still remembered by some ; and the worth of the other needs not beg our commendation. The author was one of the most eminent divines at the Synod of Dort, when the subject-matter of this discourse was in contest. Whether our author was then of that judgment, which he declares here, I am not certain. However, if his after thoughts inclined him to truth, we have reason to bless the GOD of truth for the discovery. And I heartily wish, that all men, who are entangled in the briars of these prickly disputations, as our reverend author calls them, would lay aside all prejudice, and yield to scripture and reason.*

Thy Friend and

Servant in Christ,

J. G.

*A DISCOURSE concerning the NECESSITY and CONTINGENCY of EVENTS.*

1. **T**HE sum of the controversy is this : *Whether all things that ever have or shall come to pass in the world, have been, or shall be effected necessarily, in respect of an irresistible decree, by which GOD hath everlastingly determined, that they should inevitably come to pass ?*

2. *Whether many things have not been done contingently, or after such a middle manner between impossibility of being, and necessity of being, that some things which have been, might as well not have been, and many things which have not been, might as well have been, for aught GOD hath decreed to the contrary ?*

An happy composing of this intricate controversy will be of excellent use, not only in guiding us safe through the briars of these prickly disputations of *predestination, free-will, the cause of sin, &c.* but likewise in easing us of many scruples and perplexing cases, which daily arise in our minds, concerning GOD's *special decrees and particular providence*, in respect of the passages of our life.

I purpose



I purpose to carry such an equal eye to brevity and perspicuity, that the reader shall have no just cause to say, that I am either obscure or tedious.

I have already divided the main question into two particular *queries*. Many divines have subscribed to the first *query*: maintaining, that whatsoever any creature doth, *man or beast, plants or inanimate elements and meteors*, GOD from all eternity hath *decreed* that they should *necessarily* do it; so that a man doth not so much as spit without a decree: yea, *they say*, that there falleth not so much as a drop of rain, or ariseth a *blast* of wind, without the command of GOD.

Others have subscribed to the *second*; teaching that as some things are *impossible*, and cannot be; some things *necessary*, and cannot but be; so GOD in his wisdom hath *poised* some things in such an equal *possibility* of being or not being, and left it to his creatures *choice* to turn the *scale*, that in respect of him they fall out *contingently*; it being as possible for his creatures to have *omitted* them, as to have done them.

I have a good while *halted* between these two opinions; I have hovered over them, to see where I had best to light. Sometimes I have sent out my assent like *Noah's dove*, but she speedily withdrew back again, till at length, finding better entertainment amongst this *second* company, she hath returned at last with an *olive-branch* in her mouth.

The arguments, by which *truth* first courted, and at last *ravished* my assent, are those which both *confirm* the second, and *confute* the first opinion.

The first manifestly discovers an *heathenish* error lurking *implicitly* therein. Our adversaries indeed disallow and heartily dislike it: but if that error be *paganism*, their opinion is little better, which I prove thus: it was the conceit of the ancient *Stoics*; that all things were brought to pass by an inevitable *destiny*, all things falling out by *fatal* necessity in spite of men, and, according to the *poets*, of GOD also. Now do not our *opposites* in this *controversy* impose a *fatal* necessity on all things? Yea, they go further

ther in this point than some *Stoics*; for, though they sub-  
 jected the *ends* to irresistible *destiny*, yet they supposed the  
*means* by which a man might, though vainly, endeavour  
 to *cross* those ends, were in man's *choice*. But our *opposi-*  
*tes* impose a *necessity* on all things whatsoever, not only  
 upon *ends*, but also upon the *means*. For example; ac-  
 cording to their doctrine, GOD hath not only decreed that  
 I shall, or that I shall not escape this *infection*, but he hath  
 also decreed that I shall, or shall not *use* the *means* to escape  
 it. So that all the *absurdities* that dog the *stoical* dream of  
*fatal* necessity at the heels, are *inseparable* attendants of this  
 opinion. For I may not only say, if I shall *die* of the  
*infection*, I shall; if I shall *not* die, I shall *not*; and there-  
 fore I need not *use means* to avoid it: but also, if I must  
*use means*, I must; if I must not, I must not: seeing  
 GOD's decree *necessitateth* as much to *use* or *omit* the *means*,  
 as to obtain or lose the *end*. For if their opinion be true,  
 all things whatsoever, *end* or *means*, of little or great mo-  
 ment, come to pass *necessarily* or *unavoidably*, by reason of  
 GOD's eternal *decree*.

Here they have two *evasions*. The first is this: albeit  
 say they, GOD hath most certainly *determined* what shall,  
 or what shall not be done concerning us; yet his *decree* is  
 hid from us, and we must *use ordinary* means for the ob-  
 taining of such and such *ends*, keeping on the ordinary  
 course which he hath *revealed* to us.

See the vanity of this shift; our *opposites* teach, that  
 whatever GOD hath decreed shall be *done*, and whatsoever  
 is *omitted* shall be *undone*. If therefore GOD hath deter-  
 mined that we should not *use* such and such *means*, it is  
*impossible* for us to *use* them; if he hath decreed that we  
 should, it is *impossible* that we should *omit* them. And  
 therefore it is *ridiculous* to say, that although GOD, in  
 his *secret* will, hath determined that we should not do such  
 a thing, yet we are to do it. Seeing his *decree*, though  
 it be *secret*, yet will have its *effect*; and it is absolutely *im-*  
*possible* we should do that, which GOD hath *determined* we  
 shall not do.

However,

However, say our opposites, our opinion is far from stoicism; for the Stoics thought, that all things came *inevitably* to pass, by reason of an *indissoluble* chain and connexion of *natural* causes. But we teach, that all events are *irresistibly* necessary, by reason of GOD's everlasting *decrees*, and his *omnipotency* executing them.

This reason is so poor a one, that I am more troubled to wonder at it, than to confute it. Yet, that I may satisfy it distinctly, I will divide the opinion of the Stoics into two particular tenets.

1. They hold, that all things come to pass *inevitably*.
2. That the reason of this *inevitableness* of events is, an unchangeable connexion of *natural* causes.

Our opposites stiffly maintain the former of the tenets. Now let the reader observe, that the most prodigious absurdities, accompanying this stoical error, follow the first part of their opinion, though sequestered from the second. For if all things come to pass unavoidably, what need I care what I do? Yea, if I shall care, I shall care, whether I will or no. And a thousand the like horrid conceits follow the opinion of the *necessity* of events, whatsoever we make to be the cause of this necessity.

It is a great point of *Turkish* divinity at this day, that all things are done *unavoidably*; and they with our opposites, make GOD's will to be the cause of this unavoidableness; and therefore they judge of GOD's pleasure or displeasure by the events. Yet there is no christian but abhorreth this *turcism*, and gives it no better entertainment than *anathema maranatha*.

It is apparent therefore, that, albeit our adversaries are christians, yet in this point their opinion is guilty both of *stoicism* and *turcism*.

Again, if we consider the second part of the Stoics opinion, we shall perceive, that the opinion which we confute, cannot be minced, but that it will be complete stoicism. The Stoics thought the connexion of causes to be the cause of the *necessity* of events, it is true: but what did they think to be the connexion of causes? Doubtless the eternal laws



laws of nature, which they supposed to be a Deity. It is very probable, they thought the *fates* to be but nature's laws: but whatsoever they meant by the *fates*, it is evident, they made their *decrees* to be the cause of the connexion of causes. How often read we both in philosophers and poets, of *fatorum decreta*, the *decrees of the fates*? Yea the word *fatum* itself is as much as a *decree*. Well then, to apply: do not our adversaries, in this point, suppose an inviolable linking of all things together, one *necessarily* following in the neck of another? Do they not make the *cause* of this linking to be GOD's irresistible decree? Do not they then defend complete stoicism? What part of stoicism do they disclaim? Do they not maintain *inevitable* necessity? Do they not teach an indissoluble connexion of all things? Do they not believe the divine decrees to be the cause of this connexion? Certainly they must needs confess themselves Stoics in this point, unless we will give them leave to grant the premises, and deny the conclusion. I know the Stoics had mis-conceits concerning the deities, as accounting those to be deities which are not, whose decrees they made the causes of all things. But these were the common errors of *paganism*, and are besides the point in hand. And truly, these set aside, I see not wherein our adversaries differ from the Stoics. I have prosecuted this argument more copiously, because I think verily, there are few opinions which have a greater retinue of erroneous consequences, than this of the unavoidable *necessity* of events. Some of them may make one *laugh*, and some of them may make one *tremble*. I omit the former, because they are obvious to every man's conceit; and I would not willingly make sport of so serious a matter. Of the last sort I will specify one in a second argument.

That opinion, which being admitted maketh GOD the author of sin, is gross and erroneous, that I may say no worse; but so, I speak it with horror, doth the opinion of our opposites. I know many of them are real christians; and as they abhor stoical errors, so they hold this damnable doctrine (which is worse than ever any *heretic* held, which transformeth

transformeth GOD into a devil) to be most accursed: yet so the case standeth, that as the error of *fatal necessity*, so this of the *cause of sin*, fatally followeth their opinion; which I prove thus.

They teach, that nothing is done in the world, or can be done, but what GOD hath *decreed* to be done. Now it is too certain, that three quarters of the things which are done in the world are *sins*: therefore, according to this opinion, GOD is the principal *cause* of sins, devils and men are but his *instruments*.

The usual answer is, that GOD is the cause of all the *actions* that are sinful, but not of the *sinfulness* of the actions; of all our *works*, but not of our *obliquities*; as one that rides upon a halting jade is the cause of her *motion*, and yet not of her *halting*.

It is a hard case, when they have but one frivolous distinction, to keep GOD from *sinning*. Might I here, without wandering, discourse of the nature of sin, I could prove *sin* itself to be an *action*, and confute this groundless distinction that way; but I will keep myself as much to the purpose as I can.

That which is a *principal* cause of any action, is a cause of those *events*, which accompany that action *necessarily*. This rule is most certain. Therefore if GOD by his decrees force us to those actions, which cannot be done without sin, GOD himself, I am afraid to rehearse it, must needs be guilty of sin. If GOD decreed that *Adam* should *unavoidably* eat the forbidden fruit, seeing the *eating* of the fruit, which he had forbidden, must needs be with a gross obliquity, I do not see how this distinction will justify GOD; for *Adam* sinned because he *ate* the fruit that was forbidden: but they say, GOD *decreed*, that he should eat the fruit which was forbidden, *necessarily* and *unavoidably*. The conclusion is too blasphemous to be repeated.

The reader may see, how well that common distinction holdeth water; yea, if this nicety were found, man himself might prove, that he committed no murder, though he stabbed the dead party to the heart; for at his arraignment he

might tell the judge, that he did indeed thrust his dagger into his heart, but it was not *that* which took away his life, but the extinction of his natural heat and vital spirits. Who seeth not the frenzy of him, who should make this apology? Yet this is all our adversaries say for GOD. They say, "His *decree* was the *cause* that *Adam* took the fruit, and "put it into his mouth, and ate that which he had commanded he should not eat." Yet they say, "He was not "the cause of the transgression of the commandment."

The example of the halting jade is a mere impertinency; for suppose it were, as it is not, applicable to us, who halt naturally; yet *Adam*, before this action, was sound, and therefore GOD, *necessitating* him to such an inconveniency, dealt with him as if one should drive a lusty nag into rough passages, where he must needs break his legs. Neither is it, as I said, applicable unto us the *lame* posterity of *Adam*; for he who rideth an horse that was lame before, although he be not a cause of the impotency which he findeth in the horse, yet in urging him to motion, he is now a cause of the *actual* imperfection in the motion, and so perhaps a cause of increasing the impotency for the future; though he were not the cause of his lameness, yet he is of his limping at that time. Let the horse stand still, and see whether he will halt or no. Indeed, if the horse go of himself, then the rider is no cause of his halting. And so we may say, that all our haltings are from ourselves, without any instigation from GOD.

I know our opposites have another shift, teaching, that GOD useth to punish one sin by making us commit another; so that, although we *sin*, he doth but *punish*.

Albeit I do not believe this to be true, yet I abstain at this time from examining it, because it weakens not my argument about *Adam*; for his sin was the first that ever he committed, and the original of all that ever followed; and therefore, if GOD's decree was the cause that he ate the forbidden fruit, as our adversaries teach, it is apparent whom they make the author of all sin. These two arguments, well scanned, are sufficient to make any afraid of  
that



that opinion, which believeth all things to come to pass *necessarily*, by reason of GOD's *irresistible* decree.

Moreover seeing it is clogged with such monstrous consequences, methinks, our opinion should be far more amiable, which giveth no countenance to such hideous misshapen errors.

Now I proceed to the confirmation of our opinion, concerning the contingency of some events in respect of GOD, by two arguments more.

The first is this, that GOD hath decreed, that all his creatures should *ordinarily* work according to their several kinds and endowments, by which he in the creation distinguished them. For illustration, they may be ranked into three several forms.

In the lowest stand the mere natural agents, inanimate and senseless creatures. To these GOD hath given certain instincts and inclinations, by which they are determinately swayed to these or those certain effects and operations, unless they are outwardly hindered; for *heavy* bodies cannot chuse but *descend*, *fire* cannot chuse but *burn*.

In the second stand the sensitive creatures, four-footed beasts, fowls, and fishes. To these GOD hath given sense and knowledge, to discern what is good for their nature, and what is bad; and amongst divers goods, to prefer that which is best. He hath given them also a free appetite, or a kind of sensitive will, by which they may either *freely* prosecute, or avoid, such objects as they like or dislike; not *determinately* tied to this or that operation, as the other were. A *stone* cannot chuse but descend; but a *beast* may as well go up hill as down.

In the upper form are men, reasonable creatures, whom GOD hath made more *voluntary* than the other, by giving them greater *freedom* of choice, and presenting unto their more elevated knowledge a great variety of objects. Now, without doubt, GOD thus distinguished his creatures in abilities and faculties, that they might operate in their several kinds; that the *natural* agents might work *naturally*, the *voluntary*, *voluntarily*. The truth of all this no man will deny

ny explicitly: well then, let them hearken to the consequences of this truth. If GOD hath decreed, that many things should be done *voluntarily* by his creatures; then hath he decreed, that many things should be done *contingently*, in respect of him: but the first is granted, therefore the second must. The connexion I prove thus. All things are done *contingently* in respect of GOD, which, for aught he hath decreed, might with as much *possibility* not be as be. But all things, which are done by the creatures *voluntarily*, may as well not be done as done: therefore, if he hath decreed, that many things should be done *voluntarily*, he hath also decreed, that they should be done *contingently*. The minor is evident; because, if the creatures may not as well omit them as do them, they do them not *voluntarily*, but *necessarily*.

This argument both confirms and explains our opinion, shewing how and why many things come to pass *contingently* in respect of GOD; yea, it maketh it questionless, that GOD hath decreed that many things should be done *contingently*, or after such a *resistible* manner, that they might, without *frustrating* his decree, have been *left* undone. Yea, we see now that *contingency* itself is *necessary* in respect of GOD's will, who will have many things done *voluntarily*. Otherwise to what purpose did GOD give his creatures *wills*, if he will not suffer them to use them?

See again the inconveniencies of the former opinion, which confoundeth all sorts of creatures, and makes a man to operate with no more *freedom*, than a *stock* or *stone*! For according to our opposites, I eat, I drink, or walk with as much *necessity*, as *lead* sinketh down. GOD hath decreed that *that* should sink, and therefore it must; and so GOD hath decreed that I must walk a *mile*, and therefore I must.

Here they have a startling hole, but it is so poor a one, that it doth not relieve but disgrace them. They say, that GOD's decree doth not *compel* any man's *will* to any thing, that he should do such a thing whether he will or no; but he so disposeth and worketh it, that it shall desire that

which

which GOD would have done. And therefore, they say, man hath use of his *will*, because whatsoever he doth, though *necessitated* to it by GOD, yet he doth it *willingly*.

This *flim-flam* would move any man's patience; but I will be serious. The prerogative of a *voluntary* agent consisteth not in doing that which it desireth to do, or rather in desiring to do that which it doth in *freedom* from *coercion* and *violence*; but in liberty of *choice* to do or not to do this or that, and so in *freedom* from the *necessity* of *immutability*. So that still for all this *shift*, they make no man more *voluntary* than a *stone*. A *stone* hath a *natural* propension or kind of *appetite* to fall downward; yet because this appetite is restrained *necessarily* to this *term*, so that the *stone* must needs fall down, it cannot be said to descend *voluntarily*, in any propriety of speech. Is not this just a man's case, according to them? A man drinks; they grant he doth it *voluntarily*; yet they say, his *will* is so *restrained* by GOD's *decree* to this action, that it was not *possible* for him to *omit* it. What difference is there now betwixt the *will* of a *man*, and the *will* of a *stone*, only that GOD employeth a man in more actions; which altereth not the case? Surely if this be true, it was no wonder *Deucalion* and *Pyrrha* got stones turned into men so fast.

This argument doth so entangle our opposites, that although in the question about *particular* providence they are peremptorily for the *necessity* of all *events* in respect of GOD; yet when they come to the question about *free-will*, and more particularly *free-will* about *natural* matters, as walking, sleeping, riding, they speak so off and on, that one may plainly perceive they have a *wolf* by the ears: sometimes they yield *free-will* in such things, not considering how they *contradict* what they said before about *particular* providence; sometimes they yield it, they say, not so much because they believe it, as because they will not contend about such *petty* matters; a very sleeveless put off! Sometimes they stiffly deny it, but they are unwilling or unable to produce any arguments worth a rush.

That opinion which makes GOD's *knowledge* absolutely *infinite*, and most glorifieth his *omniscience*, must needs be better



better *divinity*, than that which supposeth by its consequence GOD's knowledge to be but *finite*. Now our opinion doth the first, that of our opposites the second; therefore, the *minor* proposition I justify thus. An absolute *infinity* of knowledge must be either in respect of the *number* of objects, or in respect of the *manner* of comprehending them. Now, according to their opinion, in these respects, GOD's knowledge is but *finite*, *ergo*.

For the first respect, to speak exactly, it cannot make knowledge completely *infinite*. For since there cannot be an exact *infinite* number of *objects*, seeing all things that ever were, or ever shall be, cannot be truly *infinite* in number; it is impossible that any knowledge whatsoever should be properly termed *infinite* in this respect. Yea, seeing the vastest number, and most incomprehensible to our mortal *arithmetic*, may in itself be doubled and trebled, it is an infallible truth, that any knowledge in this regard may be trebled also, and yet remain *finite*. Well, come to the second respect, here also our opposites much *debase* GOD's knowledge, making it but *finite*, and that not of the largest sort. For while they teach, that GOD hath decreed how all things shall *infallibly* come to pass, they require indeed of GOD an *infinite* power, whereby to *execute* his decrees; but seeing all things shall be effected as he hath decreed they should, a *finite* knowledge may well serve the turn. What wonder is it if GOD *fore-knows* what will be done, if he can but *remember* his own decrees? It requireth indeed a *large memory*, but not an *infinite knowledge*.

Suppose a man had power to bring to pass what he determined, it would be no strange matter if he could *fore-tell* future events: he would make a hard shift with his registers and records, and the art of *memory*, but he would remember what he had *contrived* should come to pass.

Now our opinion attributeth unto GOD a knowledge exactly *infinite*, and makes his *prescience* more wonderful. GOD, say we, *from eternity*, hath ordered that such *agents* as he created *voluntarily*, should have a double *liberty* in their operations, *viz.* a *liberty of contradiction*, to do, or not to do; as a *painter* may choose whether he will work  
or

or no: and a *liberty of contrariety*, to do a thing after this or that manner; as a *painter* may use what *colours*, in what *quantity*, and after what *fashion* he pleaseth.

Now GOD leaving to his creatures *free liberty* to work or not work after this or that manner, so that for any *necessity* imposed upon their actions by him, whatsoever they omit was as possible to be done, as what they did—And yet from all eternity, *fore-knowing* whatsoever his creatures would do, or not do, his *fore-knowledge* must needs be *infinite*, and most admirable. *Infinite*, I say, not in respect of the *number* of objects, for so, as I said before, no knowledge can be *infinite*: but in respect of the boundless *manner* of actual comprehending those things with an *infallible* fore-sight, which in respect of GOD were *contingent*, their not being being as possible as their being. And indeed this *fore-sight* of future *contingents*, is the true *character* and royal *prerogative* of divine knowledge: and therefore in the 41st of *Isaiah*, GOD upbraideth the *Pagan* deities with this privilege peculiar to himself, though jugglingly pretended by them in their lying *oracles*, *verse* 21. The Lord biddeth them produce the strongest arguments by which they could prove themselves gods: and in the next verse he particularizeth, and thrice bids them *tell, if they can, what shall happen in the times to come*. How much then do our opposites dishonour GOD, making the great *miracle* of his *fore-sight* of future *contingents* to be as much as nothing? Seeing they say, that albeit they are *contingent* in respect of us, yet they are *necessary* in respect of him? When any man hath answered any of these four arguments, then will I change my opinion. In the mean time, I proceed to the vindicating it from such objections, as our enemies in this case make against it. The dissipating of those mists wherewith they endeavour to obscure this opinion, will not only clear the truth, but also the sense of it.

First, they say, that while we avoid *stoicism*, we fall into flat *epicurism*; for while we make so many things in the world fall out according to the inconstant bent of *voluntary* agents, we *deify chance*, and make *fortune* a *goddess*; we in effect

effect deny GOD's *providence*, which makes all things come to pass according to a most wise and constant method.

I will be as forward as any man to anathematize him, who holdeth any thing to fall out *fortuitously* in respect of GOD: I will make it evident, that our opinion makes no *chance* in respect of GOD, and most sweetly illustrates GOD's *providence*.

First, There is a vast difference between *contingency* and *casuality*. *Contingency* is an equal *possibility* of being or not being: *casuality* is the coming to pass of an event *ex improviso*, beside the fore-thought of the thing. Now it is our assertion, that many things fall out *contingently*, in respect of GOD, because he imposed no *necessity* upon their being, but left them to the pleasure of inferior causes, that they might as well not have been, as been. But we say withal, that nothing falleth out *casually* in respect of GOD, because nothing cometh to pass without his unerring *fore-sight*; he knowing from all eternity what his creatures would do, though he left it to their pleasure to do what they list.

In *events* there is a great difference between *contingency* and *casuality* of events, in respect of men; for most things we do, we do *contingently*, being not bound by any *inevitable necessity* to do them; yet as long as we do them upon certain reasons, for certain *ends*, we do them not by *chance*. Yet the same *events* are not after the same manner *contingent* in respect of GOD, as they are in respect of us. For he, out of the prerogative of his Deity, fore-knoweth them; but we cannot have *infallible* fore-sight of them; and what fore-sight we have, is at a very little distance.

And indeed, if this point be punctually canvassed, we shall perceive, that in the same proportion we have any *knowledge* of them, they are not *contingent*, but *necessary*; for every thing, so far as it is in existence, or in near proportion to it, is *necessary*.

[To be concluded in our next.]

*Continued to Page 303*

SERMON



## S E R M O N VII.

On PSALM xc. 2.

*From Everlasting to Everlasting thou art GOD.*

1. **I** Would fain speak of that awful subject eternity. But how can we grasp it in our thought? It is so vast that the narrow mind of man is utterly unable to comprehend it. But does it not bear some affinity to another incomprehensible thing, immensity? May not space, though an unsubstantial thing, be compared with another unsubstantial thing, duration? But what is immensity? It is boundless space. And what is eternity? It is boundless duration.

2. Eternity has generally been considered as divisible into two parts: which have been termed, eternity *a parte post*, and eternity *a parte ante*: that is, in plain *English*, that eternity which is past, and that eternity which is to come. And does there not seem to be an intimation of this distinction in the text? *Thou art GOD from everlasting*; here is an expression of that eternity which is past—*to everlasting*; here is an expression of that eternity which is to come. Perhaps indeed some may think it is not strictly proper, to say, there is an eternity that is past. But the meaning is easily understood: we mean thereby, duration which had no beginning: as by eternity to come, we mean that duration which will have no end.

3. It is GOD alone who (to use the exalted language of scripture) *inhabiteh eternity* in both these senses. The great Creator alone (not any of his creatures) is *from everlasting to everlasting*: his duration alone, as it had no beginning, so it cannot have any end. On this consideration it is, that one speaks thus, in addressing *Immanuel, GOD* with us.

“ Hail, GOD the Son, with glory crown'd,

E'er time began to be;

Thron'd with thy Sire through half the round

Of wide eternity!”

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And

And again,

“ Hail, GOD the Son, with glory crown'd,  
When time shall cease to be :  
Thron'd with the Father through the round  
Of whole eternity !”

4. “ E'er time began to be.”—But what is *time* ? It is not easy to say, as frequently as we have had the word in our mouth. We know not what it properly is: we cannot well tell how to define it. But is it not in some sense a fragment of eternity, broken off at both ends ? That portion of duration, which commenced when the world began, which will continue as long as this world endures, and then expire for ever ? That portion of it, which is at present measured by the revolution of the sun and planets, lying (so to speak) between two eternities, that which is past, and that which is to come. But as soon as the heavens and the earth flee away from the face of him that sitteth on the great white throne, time will be no more, but sink for ever into the ocean of eternity.

5. But by what means can a mortal man, the creature of a day, form any idea of eternity ? What can we find within the compass of nature, to illustrate it by ? With what comparison shall we compare it ? What is there that bears any resemblance to it ? Does there not seem to be some sort of analogy, between boundless duration and boundless space ? The great Creator, the infinite Spirit, inhabits both the one and the other. This is one of his peculiar prerogatives : *Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord ?* Yea, not only the utmost regions of creation, but all the expanse of boundless space ! Mean time how many of the children of men say,

“ Lo, on a narrow neck of land,  
'Midst two unbounded seas I stand,  
Secure, insensible !

A point of time, a moment's space,

Removes

Removes me to that heav'nly place,  
Or shuts me up in hell?"

6. But leaving one of these unbounded seas to the Father of eternity, to whom alone duration without beginning belongs, let us turn our thoughts on duration without end. This is not an incommunicable attribute of the great Creator; but he has been graciously pleased to make innumerable multitudes of his creatures partakers of it. He has imparted this not only to angels, and archangels, and all the companies of heaven, who are not intended to die, but to glorify him and live in his presence for ever: but also to the inhabitants of the earth, who dwell in houses of clay. Their bodies indeed are *crushed before the moth*, but their souls will never die. GOD made them, as an ancient writer speaks, to be *pictures of his own eternity*. Indeed all spirits we have reason to believe, are clothed with immortality: having no inward principle of corruption, and being liable to no external violence.

7. Perhaps we may go a step farther still. Is not matter itself, as well as spirit, in one sense eternal? Not indeed *a parte ante*, as some senseless philosophers, both ancient and modern, have dreamed. Not that any thing had existed from eternity; seeing if so, it must be GOD. Yea, it must be the one GOD; for it is impossible there should be two gods or two eternals. But although nothing beside the great GOD, can have existed from everlasting, (none else can be eternal, *a parte ante*,) yet there is no absurdity in supposing that all creatures are eternal *a parte post*. All matter is indeed continually changing, and that into ten thousand forms. But that it is changeable does in no wise imply, that it is perishable. The substance may remain one and the same, though under innumerable different forms. It is very possible any portion of matter may be resolved into the atoms of which it was originally composed. But what reason have we to believe, that one of these atoms ever was or ever will be annihilated? It never can, unless



less by the uncontrollable power of its Almighty Creator. And is it probable that ever he will exert this power, in unmaking any of the things that he hath made? In this also, GOD is *not a son of man that he should repent*. Indeed every creature under heaven, does and must continually change its form: which we can now easily account for: as it clearly appears from late discoveries that ethereal fire enters into the composition of every part of the creation. Now this is essentially *edax rerum*. It is the universal menstruum, the discohere of all things under the sun. By the force of this, even the strongest, the firmest bodies are dissolved. It appears from the experiments repeatedly made by the great lord *Bacon*, that even diamonds, by a high degree of heat, may be turned into dust. And that, in a still higher degree, (strange as it may seem) they will totally flame away. Yea, by this *the heavens themselves will be dissolved; the elements shall melt with fervent heat*. But they will be only dissolved; not destroyed: they will melt; but they will not perish. Though they lose their present form, yet not a particle of them will ever lose its existence; but every atom of them will remain under one form or other to all eternity.

8. But still we would inquire, What is this eternity? How shall we pour any light upon this abstruse subject? It cannot be the object of our understanding. And with what comparisons shall we compare it? How infinitely does it transcend all these? What are any temporal things laid in the balance with those that are eternal? What is the duration of the long-lived oak, of the ancient castle, of *Trojan's* pillar, of *Pompey's* amphitheatre? What is the antiquity of the *Tuscan* urns, though probably older than the foundation of *Rome*; yea, of the pyramids of *Egypt*, suppose they have remained upwards of three thousand years; when laid in the balance of eternity? it vanishes into nothing. Nay, what is the duration of *the everlasting hills*, figuratively so called, which have remained ever since the general deluge, if not from the foundation of the world, in comparison of eternity? No more than an insignificant cypher. Go farther

ther yet. Consider the duration, from the creation of the first-born sons of GOD, of *Michael* the archangel in particular, to the hour when he shall be commissioned to sound his trumpet, and to utter his mighty voice through the vault of heaven, "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment!" Is it not a moment, a point, a nothing, in comparison of unfathomable eternity? Add to this a thousand, a million of years, add a million, a million of millions of ages, before the mountains were brought forth, or the earth and the round world were made: what is all this, in comparison of that eternity which is past? Is it not less, infinitely less, than a single drop of water to the whole ocean? Yea, immeasurably less, than a day, an hour, a moment, to a million of ages. Go back a thousand millions still. Yet you are no nearer the beginning of eternity.

9. Are we able to form a more adequate conception of eternity to come? In order to this, let us compare it with the several degrees of duration, which we are acquainted with. An ephemeron fly lives six hours, from six in the evening to twelve. This is a short life compared to that of a man, which continues threescore or fourscore years. And this itself is short, if it be compared to the nine hundred and sixty-nine years of *Methuselah*. Yet what are these years, yea, all that have succeeded each other, from the time that the heavens and the earth were erected, to the time when the heavens shall pass away, and the earth with the works of it shall be burnt up, if we compare them to the length of that duration, which never shall have an end!

10. In order to illustrate this, a late author has repeated that striking thought of *St. Cyprian*. Suppose there were a ball of sand, as large as the globe of earth: suppose a grain of this sand were to be annihilated, reduced to nothing, in a thousand years: yet that whole space of time wherein this ball would be annihilating, at the rate of one grain in a thousand years, would bear infinitely less proportion to eternity, duration without end, than a single grain of sand would bear to all that mass.

11. To

11. To infix this important point the more deeply in your mind, consider another comparison. Suppose the ocean to be so enlarged, as to include all the space between the earth and the starry heavens. Suppose a drop of this water to be annihilated, once in a thousand years : yet that whole space of time, in which this ocean would be annihilating, at the rate of one drop in a thousand years, would be infinitely less in proportion to eternity, than one drop of water to that whole ocean.

Look then at those immortal spirits, whether they are in this, or the other world. When they shall have lived thousands of thousands of years, yea, millions of millions of ages, their duration will be but just begun : they will be only upon the threshold of eternity.

12. But besides this division of eternity into that which is past and that which is to come, there is another division of eternity, which is of unspeakable importance. That which is to come, as it relates to immortal spirits, is either a happy or a miserable eternity.

13. See the spirits of the righteous, that are already praising GOD in a happy eternity. We are ready to say, how short will it appear, to those who drink of the rivers of pleasure at GOD's right hand ? We are ready to cry out,

“ A day without night  
They dwell in his sight,  
And eternity seems as a day !”

But this is only speaking after the manner of men. For the measures of long and short, are only applicable to time, which admits of bounds, and not to unbounded duration. This rolls on (according to our low conceptions) with unutterable, inconceivable swiftness ; if one would not rather say, it does not roll, or move at all, but is one, still, immoveable ocean. For the inhabitants of heaven *cease not day or night*, but continually cry, *holy, holy, holy, is the Lord, the GOD, the Almighty : who was, and who is, and who is to come !* And when millions of millions of ages are elapsed, their eternity is but just begun.

14. On



14. On the other hand, in what a condition are those immortal spirits, which have made choice of a *miserable* eternity? I say, made choice: for it is impossible this should be the lot of any creature, but by his own act and deed. The day is coming, when every soul will be constrained to acknowledge, in the sight of men and angels,

“ No dire decree of thine did seal,  
Or fix th’ unalterable doom ;  
Consign my unborn soul to hell,  
Or damn me from my mother’s womb.”

In what condition will such a spirit be, after the sentence is executed, *Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels?* Suppose him to be just now plunged into *the lake of fire, burning with brimstone, where they have no rest day or night, but the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.* For ever and ever! Why, if we were only to be chained down one day, yea, one hour, in a lake of fire, how amazingly long would one day, or one hour appear? I know not if it would not seem as a thousand years. But, astonishing thought! After thousands of thousands, he has but just tasted of his bitter cup! After millions, it will be no nearer the end, than it was the moment it began.

15. What then is he, how foolish, how mad, in how unutterable a degree of distraction, who seeming to have the understanding of a man, deliberately prefers temporal things to eternal? Who (allowing that absurd, impossible supposition, that wickedness is happiness: a supposition utterly contrary to all reason, as well as to matter of fact) prefers the happiness of a year, say a thousand years, to the happiness of eternity? In comparison of which, a thousand ages are infinitely less than a year, a day, a moment? Especially when we take this into the consideration (which indeed should never be forgotten) that the refusing of a happy eternity implies, the choosing of a miserable eternity. For there is not, cannot be any medium between everlasting joy and everlasting pain. It is a vain thought, which some  
have

have entertained, that death will put an end to the soul as well as the body. It will put an end to neither the one nor the other; it will only alter the manner of their existence. But when the body *returns to the dust as it was, the spirit will return to GOD that gave it.* Therefore at the moment of death, it must be unspeakably happy or unspeakably miserable. And that misery will never end.

“ Never! When sinks the soul at the dread sound,  
Into a gulf how dark, and how profound!”

How often would he who had made the wretched choice, wish for the death both of his soul and body. It is not impossible, he might pray in some such manner as Dr. Young supposes,

“ When I have writh’d ten thousand years in fire,  
Ten thousand, thousand, let me then expire!”

16. Yet this unspeakable folly, this unutterable madness, of preferring present things to eternal, is the disease of every man, born into the world, while in his natural state. For such is the constitution of our nature, that as the eye sees only such a portion of space at once, so the mind sees only such a portion of time at once. And as all the space that lies beyond this, is invisible to the eye, so all the time which lies beyond that compass, is invisible to the mind. So that we do not perceive either the space or the time, which is at a distance from us. The eye sees distinctly the space that is near it, with the objects which it contains. In like manner, the mind sees distinctly those objects which are within such a distance of time. The eye does not see the beauties of *China*. They are at too great a distance. There is too great a space between us and them: therefore we are not affected by them. They are as nothing to us: it is just the same to us, as if they had no being. For the same reason the mind does not see either the beauties or the terrors of eternity. We are not at all affected by them, because they are so distant from us. On this account it is, that they appear to us as nothing: just as if they had no existence.

existence. Mean time we are wholly taken up with things present, whether in time or space; and things appear less and less as they are more and more distant from us, either in one respect or the other. And so it must be; such is the constitution of our nature, till nature is changed by almighty grace. But this is no manner of excuse for those who continue in their natural blindness to futurity: because a remedy for it is provided, which is found by all that seek it. Yea, it is freely given to all that sincerely ask it.

17. This remedy is faith. I do not mean, that which is the faith of a heathen, who believes that there is a GOD, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him; but that which is defined by the apostle, *An evidence, or conviction, of things not seen*: a divine evidence and conviction of the invisible and eternal world. This alone opens the eyes of the understanding, to see GOD and the things of GOD. This, as it were, takes away, or renders transparent, the impenetrable veil,

“ Which hangs ’twixt mortal and immortal being.”

When

“ Faith lends its realizing light,  
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly :  
The invisible appears in sight,  
And GOD is seen by mortal eye.”

Accordingly, a believer (in the scriptural sense) lives in eternity, and walks in eternity. His prospect is enlarged. His view is not any longer bounded by present things: no, nor by an earthly hemisphere, though it were as *Milton* speaks, “ tenfold the length of this terrene.” Faith places the unseen, the eternal world continually before his face. Consequently he *looks not at the things that are seen*:

“ Wealth, honour, pleasure, or what else,  
This short-enduring world can give.”

These are not his aim, the object of his pursuit, his desire or happiness: *but at the things that are not seen*; at the

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favour,



favour, the image and the glory of GOD : as well knowing that *the things which are seen are temporal*, a vapour, a shadow, a dream, that vanishes away ; whereas *the things that are not seen are eternal*, real, solid, unchangeable.

18. What then can be a fitter employment for a wise man, than to meditate upon these things ? Frequently to expand his thoughts, " beyond the bounds of this diurnal sphere," and to expatiate above even the starry heavens, in the fields of eternity ? What a means might it be, to confirm his contempt of the poor, little things of earth ? When a man of huge possessions was boasting to his friend of the largeness of his estate, *Socrates* desired him to bring a map of the earth, and to point out *Attica* therein. When this was done (although not very easily, as it was a small country) he next desired *Alcibiades* to point out his own estate therein. When he could not do this, it was easy to observe how trifling the possessions were, in which he had so prided himself, in comparison of the whole earth ! How applicable is this to the present case. Does any one value himself on his earthly possessions ? Alas ! what is the whole globe of earth, to the infinity of space ? a mere speck of creation. And what is the life of man, yea, the duration of the earth itself, but a speck of time, if it be compared to the length of eternity ? Think of this ! let it sink into your thought, till you have some conception, however imperfect, of

That " boundless, fathomless abyfs,  
Without a bottom or a shore."

19. But if naked eternity, so to speak, be so vast, so astonishing an object, as even to overwhelm your thought, how does it still enlarge the idea, to behold it clothed with either happiness or misery ! Eternal bliss or pain ! Everlasting happiness, or everlasting misery ? One would think it would swallow up every other thought, in every reasonable creature. Allow me only this, " Thou art on the brink of either a happy or miserable eternity : " thy Crea-

ator bids thee now stretch out thy hand, either to the one or the other: and one would imagine no rational creature could think on any thing else. One would suppose, that this single point would engross his whole attention. Certainly it ought so to do: certainly if these things are so, there can be but one thing needful. O let you and I at least, whatever others do, chuse that better part which shall never be taken away from us!

20. Before I close this subject, permit me to touch upon two remarkable passages in the psalms (one in the 8th, the other in the 144th,) which bear a near relation to it. The former is, *When I consider thy heavens; the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained: what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?* Here man is considered as a cypher, a point compared to immensity. The latter is, *Lord, what is man, that thou hast such respect unto him? Man is like a thing of nought; his time passeth away like a shadow!* In the bible translation, the words are stronger still. *What is man, that thou takest knowledge of him? Or the son of man, that thou makest account of him?* Here the psalmist seems to consider the life of man as a moment, a nothing compared to eternity. Is not the purport of the former, How can he that filleth heaven and earth, take knowledge of such an atom as man? How is it that he is not utterly lost in the immensity of GOD's works? Is not the purport of the latter, How can he that inhabiteth eternity, stoop to regard the creature of a day? One whose life passeth away like a shadow? Is not this a thought which has struck many serious minds, as well as it did *David's*, and created a kind of fear, lest they should be forgotten before him, who grasps all space and all eternity? But does not this fear arise from a kind of supposition, that GOD is such a one as ourselves? If we consider boundless space or boundless duration, we shrink into nothing before it. But GOD is not a man. A day, a million of ages are the same with him. Therefore there is the same disproportion between him and any finite being, as between him and the creature of a day. There-  
fore

fore whenever that thought recurs, whenever you are tempted to fear, lest you should be forgotten before the immense, the eternal GOD, remember that nothing is little or great, that no duration is long or short, before him. Remember that GOD *ita præsidet singulis sicut universis, & universis sicut singulis.* That he presides over every individual, as over the universe; and the universe, as over each individual. So that you may boldly say,

Father, how wide thy glories shine,  
 Lord of the universe and mine !  
 Thy goodness watches o'er the whole,  
 As all the world were but one soul;  
 Yet counts my ev'ry sacred hair,  
 As I remain'd thy single care !

Epworth, June 28, 1786.

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*The address of the BISHOPS of the Methodist-Episcopal Church.*

TO the PRESIDENT of the UNITED STATES.

S I R,

**W**E the bishops of the Methodist-Episcopal church, humbly beg leave, in the name of our society collectively in these United States, to express to you the warm feelings of our hearts, and our sincere congratulations, on your appointment to the presidency of these states. We are conscious from the signal proofs you have already given, that you are a friend of mankind; and under this established idea, place as full a confidence in your wisdom and integrity, for the preservation of those civil and religious liberties which have been transmitted to us by the providence of GOD, and the glorious revolution, as we believe, ought to be reposed in man.

We have received the most grateful satisfaction, from the humble and entire dependance on the Great Governor of the universe which you have repeatedly expressed, acknowledg-  
 ing



ing him the source of every blessing, and particularly of the most excellent constitution of these states, which is at present the admiration of the world, and may in future become its great exemplar for imitation: and hence we enjoy a holy expectation that you will always prove a faithful and impartial patron of genuine, vital religion—the grand end of our creation and present probationary existence. And we promise you our fervent prayers to the throne of grace, that GOD Almighty may endue you with all the graces and gifts of his Holy Spirit, that may enable you to fill up your important station to his glory, the good of his church, the happiness and prosperity of the United States, and the welfare of mankind.

Signed in behalf of the Methodist-Episcopal church,  
 THOMAS COKE,  
 FRANCIS ASBURY.

*New-York, May 19, 1789.*

*To which the PRESIDENT was pleased to give the following Answer:*

To the BISHOPS of the Methodist-Episcopal church in the United States of *America*.

Gentlemen,

I return to you individually, and (through you) to your society collectively in the United States, my thanks for the demonstration of affection, and the expressions of joy offered in their behalf, on my late appointment. It shall still be my endeavour to manifest the purity of my inclinations for promoting the happiness of mankind; as well as the sincerity of my desires to contribute whatever may be in my power towards the preservation of the civil and religious liberties of the *American* people. In pursuing this line of conduct, I hope by the assistance of Divine Providence, not altogether to disappoint the confidence which you have been pleased to repose in me. It always affords me satisfaction, when I find a concurrence in sentiment and practice between all conscientious men, in acknowledgments of homage to the Great Governor of the universe, and in professions of support

support to a just civil government. After mentioning that I trust the people of every denomination, who demean themselves as good citizens, will have occasion to be convinced, that I shall always strive to prove a faithful and impartial patron of genuine, vital religion; I must assure you in particular that I take in the kindest part the promise you make of presenting your prayers at the throne of grace for me, and I likewise implore the Divine benedictions on yourselves and your religious community.

G. WASHINGTON.

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*The JOURNAL of THOMAS COKE, Bishop of the  
Methodist-Episcopal Church,*

From September 18, 1784, to June 3, 1785.

[Continued from Page 244.]

**B**ROWN's chapel, *Suffex county*, Thursday, November 18. Here I enforced the necessity of the power of godliness to a tolerable congregation in the midst of a forest.

*Moore's chapel, Suffex*, Friday 19. I preached also to-day to a tolerable congregation in the midst of a forest.

*Quantico chapel, Somerset county, state of Maryland*, Saturday and Sunday 20, 21. Near this chapel I was kindly entertained by one Mrs. *Walters*, a widow-lady of considerable fortune, but not in connexion. The chapel is most beautifully situated in a forest, and the congregations were very large both Saturday and Sunday. On the Lord's day, the chapel could not contain the people.

*Annameffex chapel, Somerset*, Monday 22. This day I also preached to a tolerable congregation in a forest. It is quite romantic to see such numbers of horses fastened to the trees. Being engaged in all the most solemn exercises of religion for three or four hours every day, and that in the middle of the day, I hardly know the day of the week, every day appearing to me like the Lord's day.

Tuesday

Tuesday 23. This day I preached at a chapel, called *Lower-chapel*, to the first inattentive congregation I have met with in *America*. There is indeed a little society here, which seemed to be all attention, whilst I pointed out the necessity of being *redeemed from all iniquity*. In the afternoon I preached at the house of Dr. *Robinson*, a physician, and one of our local preachers: here they were very attentive.

*Accomack county*, state of *Virginia*, Wednesday 24. This day I preached at *Downing's* at noon, and *Burton's* in the evening. In this part of the country we have no preaching-houses, the work being of very short standing, from one year to four: but they talk of building, and I encouraged them.

Thursday 25. We rode to-day to *Parramor's*. Here I had a small congregation. The clergy in general in these parts, never stir out to church even on a Sunday, if it rains. The people, I am told, expected me to be one of those lazy fellows.

Saturday 27. After visiting brother *Burton*, I this day returned back to brother *Parramor's*, preaching at the house of one Mr. *Garretson* in my way, and at *Parramor's* in the afternoon.

Sunday 28. I read prayers and preached this day at *Accomack*, in the court-house; and in the afternoon returned to and preached at *John Burton's* with a good deal of power, blessed be GOD.

Monday 29. I preached at one *John Purnell's*. I have now had the pleasure of hearing *Harry* preach several times.

Tuesday 30. At noon I preached in the court-house at a little town called *Snow-hill*, to a small congregation, most of whom, I suppose, were almost as dead as stones: and in the evening to a little lively congregation, at the house of one *Law*.

Wednesday, December 1. I preached this day in a chapel of ours in a forest, called *Line-chapel*. Here I had a large, lively congregation, baptized a great many children, and administered the sacrament to many communicants. For a week past I have been in a barren country for the gospel,



gospel, but am now, blessed be GOD, got again into the heart of methodism.

Thursday 2. To-day I rode through heavy rain and through the forests about thirty miles to Mr. *Airey's*, in *Dorset* county, in the state of *Maryland*: a most excellent and precious man, and our most valuable friend. He has an high esteem for our dear father Mr. *Wesley*; and is a leader of a class of about thirty members. He was the grand supporter of the preachers in this country during the late contest. When two of them were imprisoned, because they would not take the oaths, he went to *Annapolis*, and got discharges for them from the governor and council. He would have opened a correspondence with Mr. *Wesley* before this, but he thinks it would be intruding on his invaluable moments, and therefore dare not do it. He is a most hearty friend of the new plan. Indeed he has entered into the deep things of GOD. This man would no more have committed wilful rebellion, than murder: and yet he was a friend to the revolution. He had no more idea than many others, that the *English* government, whenever distress came upon them like an armed man, had any right to throw their burdens on this country. In this place I had a very lively congregation. As I had also at brother *Vickar's* on Saturday the 4th, where I administered the sacrament.

*Cambridge*, Sunday 5. In this place, which has been remarkable above any other on the continent for persecution, there arose a great dispute whether I should preach in the church or not. The ladies in general were for it, but the gentlemen against it, and the gentlemen prevailed. Accordingly the church door was locked up.

Dr. *Allen's*, Monday 6. I preached this day at noon at a place called *Bolingbroke*. Our chapel is situate in a neighbouring forest. Perhaps I have in this little tour baptized more children and adults than I should have done in my whole life, if stationed in an *English* parish. I had this morning a great escape in crossing a broad ferry. After setting off, *Harry* persuaded me to return back and leave our horses behind us, to be sent after me the next day,

day, on account of the violence of the wind. I have hardly a doubt but we should have been drowned, if we had not taken that step. We were in considerable danger as it was : and if my heart did not deceive me, I calmly and sincerely prayed that GOD would drown me and take me to himself, if the *peculiar* work in which I am engaged, was not for his glory. Dr. *Allen* is a physician of some eminence in these parts, and a most precious man, of good sense, and of great simplicity. I suppose we have a dozen physicians in our society on this continent. One of the ferrymen, of that dangerous ferry, (who, I suppose, owns the boat) is half a methodist ; and he therefore supplied us with a couple of horses to *Bolingbroke*, which is about seven miles from the ferry : and one *William Frazer* carried me in his carriage from *Bolingbroke* to Dr. *Allen's*. He and his wife have been awakened : but, says he to me, we have neither of us found *the blessing*.

Tuesday 7. I preached to-day in a large church, at a place called *Bayside*. The congregation was very large.

Wednesday 8. This morning I preached, &c. to a lively congregation at *Tuckahoe* chapel, in a forest. These are, I think, the best singers I have met with in *America*. In the afternoon I went to brother *Hopper's*. One of our preachers was taken up in this county, because he would not take the oaths of allegiance, and brother *Downs* told the preacher he was obliged to imprison him, but that he would turn his own house into his prison.

*Kent-Island*, Thursday 9. Here I was obliged to preach out of doors. The very man who published me in the church, and who is one of the vestry, and one of the principal men in the island, shut the doors of the church against me. Many people, I believe, who had no regard for the Methodists, were filled with indignation. But the natural and spiritual sun, blessed be GOD, shone upon many of us.

Friday 10. I preached at brother *Hopper's* house ; but the house would not hold the people, and many, who could not come within hearing went away. This afternoon I went to visit one brother *Chairs*, about two years ago a fa-

mous foxhunter, and now a leader of a class, and one of the most zealous men in the country. It is remarkable, that his foxhounds, though he took equal care of them, left him one after another, in about two months after he gave over hunting.

*Church-hill*, Saturday 11. Here I preached in a church in spite of the bigots; the vestry giving me an invitation.

*New-Town*, Sunday 12. I preached in this town to three large congregations. The preaching-house would not hold above half the congregation, I think, in the afternoon: so, after reading prayers in the pulpit, I preached at the door. The clergyman had but few, I believe, in the church.

Near the *Chesapeake*, Monday 13. At noon I preached, baptized and administered at a place called *Kent* chapel, and at three preached at *Worton* chapel, to a large congregation.

Tuesday 14. We crossed the bay, and at the other side were met by Mr. *Dallam*. I have prevailed upon him to give, in land, £. 250 currency towards the college, (for that is to be its name.) Mr. *Asbury* met me this side of the bay. Between us we have got about £. 1000 sterling subscribed towards the college.

*Gunpowder* chapel, Wednesday 15. I preached here to a small congregation, but most of them I believe were real christians. I found myself uncommonly enlarged on the doctrine of christian perfection: and we had a refreshing shower at the sacrament. I spent the remainder of the day at our kind brother *Walters's*, well known to brother *Rankin*.

Thursday 16. We returned this day to brother *Dallam's*, where I preached and administered the Lord's supper to an attentive people.

Friday 17. We now set off for our friend's Mr. *Gough*. His new mansion-house, which he has lately built, is reckoned one of the most elegant in the thirteen states.

*Baltimore*, Friday, Dec. 24.—Jan. 2, 1785. On Christmas-eve we opened our conference: which has continued ten days. I admire the body of American preachers. We had



had near sixty of them present. The whole number is 81. They are indeed a body of devoted, disinterested men, but most of them young. The spirit in which they conducted themselves in chusing the elders, was most pleasing. I believe they acted without being at all influenced either by friendship, or resentment, or prejudice, both in chusing and rejecting. One elder was elected for *Antigua*, *Jeremiah Lamburt*: two for *Nova-Scotia*, *Freeborn Garretson*, and *James Cromwell*; and ten for the states, *John Tunnell*, *John Haggerty*, *James O'Kelly*, *Le Roy Cole*, *William Gill*, *Nelson Reed*, *Henry Willis*, *Reuben Ellis*, *Richard Ivey*, and *Beverly Allen*. They also elected three deacons, *John Dickins*, *Caleb Boyer*, and *Ignatius Pigman*. Brothers *Tunnell*, *Willis*, and *Allen*, of the elected elders, were not present at the conference; nor brother *Boyer* of the deacons. The Lord, I think, was peculiarly present whilst I was preaching my two pastoral sermons; the first when I ordained brother *Asbury* a bishop, the second when we ordained the elders. GOD was indeed pleased to honour me before the people. At *six* every morning one of the preachers gave the people a sermon: the weather was exceedingly cold, and therefore brother *Asbury* thought it best to indulge the people: and our morning congregations held out and were good to the last. At *noon* I preached; except on the Sundays and other ordination-days, when the service began at *ten* o'clock, it generally lasting on those occasions four hours: and the chapel was full every time. At *six* in the evening, a travelling-preacher preached in the *Town* chapel, another in the *Point* chapel, (a chapel about half a mile out of town) and another in the *Dutch* church, which the pious minister (*Mr. Otterbine*) gave us the use of in the evenings during the conference. (Brother *Asbury* has so high an opinion of *Mr. Otterbine*, that we admitted him, at brother *Asbury's* desire, to lay his hands on brother *Asbury* with us, on his being ordained bishop.) By this means the congregations were divided: otherwise we should not have had half room enough for the people, who attended in the evening. Our friends in *Baltimore* were so kind as to put up a large stove,

flove, and to back several of the seats, that we might hold our conference comfortably. Before I left the town, I met our principal friends, who promised me to put up a gallery in our Town church (for so we call our preaching-houses now) immediately.

One of the week-days at noon, I made a collection towards assisting our brethren who are going to *Nova-Scotia* and *Antigua*: and our friends generously gave *fifty pounds* currency, (£. 30 sterling.)

January, Monday 3, 1785. On this day I left *Baltimore*, and came to our good friend Mr. *Gough's*, but had the coldest ride I ever rode.

January, Tuesday 4. I rode with several of my brethren to the side of the *Chesapeak-Bay*, but found it so frozen we could not pass. Here an hospitable planter took in four of us, and kindly entertained us.

Wednesday 5. I returned to *Abingdon*. Brother *Dallam* had buried his father-in-law that very day, and his house was full of carnal relations; so I stopt at our good brother *Toy's* the silversmith: however, I preached a funeral sermon in Mr. *Dallam's* house, and was heard with great attention. I now gave orders that the materials should be got for building the college.

Friday 7. We this day came to one *Barton's*, a local preacher, formerly a Quaker: he is a precious old man, and loves GOD, I believe, with all his heart.

January 8—19. *Philadelphia*. In this city I find myself perfectly at home. One thing worthy of notice happened here—one of our sisters who belonged to the *Dutch-church*, was particularly prejudiced against our liturgy, but received whilst I was reading of it, one of the greatest manifestations of GOD's love she had ever enjoyed in her life, and went away as much prejudiced in favour of it as she was before against it.

Thursday 20. *Princeton*, state of *Jersey*. I have had the pleasure of Mr. *Jones's* company from *Philadelphia* to *New-York*, where the congress is going to sit. He introduced me this evening to Dr. *Smith*, a Presbyterian minister,

ster, son-in-law to Dr. *Witherspoon*, a very candid, sensible and pious man. We lie to-night at his house.

January 22.—February 6. *New-York*. We expected that this society would have made the greatest opposition to our plan, but on the contrary they have been the most forward to promote it. They have already put up a reading-desk, and railed in a communion-table, and also purchased a burial-ground. I have united some bands here. The assistant has promised me to continue the morning-preaching faithfully. I have now given over all thoughts of going to the *West-Indies*: but have taken a ship for brother *Lambert* our elder: he is an excellent young man, and will, I trust, be a great blessing in that country. Here I published, at the desire of the conference, my sermon on the Godhead of Christ. Perhaps it was in some measure expedient; as some of our enemies began to whisper that we were enemies to the doctrine of the Trinity, because we left out the *Athanasian* and *Nicene* creeds in our liturgy. The general minutes I published in *Philadelphia*. I took shipping for brother *Garretson*, to go to *Hallifax* in *Nova-Scotia*, and left some money for brother *Cromwell*, who is soon to follow him. Our friends in *Philadelphia* and *New-York*, gave me sixty pounds currency for the missionaries, so that upon the whole I have not been above three or four pounds out of pocket on their account.

February, Monday 7, I left *New-York*; and on Tuesday, February 8, reached *Trenton*, (state of *Jersey*.) In my way I dined with my kind hospitable friend Dr. *Smith*, he would have opened his meeting-house to me, if I could have staid. At *Trenton* I had but a small congregation and about twenty hearers in the morning.

Wednesday 9. I went to *Burlington*. Here the vestry opened to me the church.

Friday 11. *New-Mills*. My congregation in this chapel was not large, but very serious. Surely this place will have much to answer for. Such faithful preaching these sixteen years.

*Philadelphia*.



*Philadelphia*, February 12—14. They are now going in reality to plaister our church here: the scaffolding is already put up. I have united many in bands; and they seem to be in good earnest about it, determined to meet. There is certainly a considerable revival in this city.

*Wilmington*, state of *Delaware*, Tuesday 15. At noon I preached in *Chester* town in the court-house, and dined with Mrs. *Wilkey* the kind landlady mentioned in a former letter. In the evening I had a large congregation at *Wilmington*, and also at five in the morning: there is a considerable revival here. From hence I went to *Duck-Creek*; to *Dover* (Mr. *Basset's*); to brother *White's*, the chief justice; to *Tuckahoe* (brother *Downs's*); to brother *Hopper's*; to *Sadler's*, *Cross-Roads*; to *New-Town*; then over the *Chesapeak-Bay* to *Abingdon*, (poor Mr. *Dallam's* wife lies dangerously ill, and his fondness for her is such, that he by no means seems prepared to receive the shock of her death;) from thence to Mr. *Gough's*; and then to *Baltimore*. Brother *Gough* has laid aside his intentions of going to *England*, for which I am not sorry.

*Baltimore*, February 26.—March 6. There is certainly a considerable revival here; the preaching-house will not hold even my week-days congregations. And at five in the morning the chapel is about half-full. I think I have prevailed on our friends in this place to build a new church. They have already subscribed about five hundred pounds sterling. Here I have printed, according to the desire of the conference, the substance of a sermon which I preached at the ordination of brother *Afbury* to the office of a bishop. It consists of two parts, 1st. A vindication of our conduct, 2dly. The characteristics of a christian bishop. There is nothing in the world, I think, about which I find more reluctance, than the becoming an author, but they force me into it. I have now formed the believers in this place into bands.

March, Monday 7. *Elkridge*. I preached here in the church to a tolerable congregation, and in the evening at the house of Mr. *Dorsey*. I have now no engagement

on

on my hands for between two and three hundred miles, so I must post on as fast as I can.

*Bladenburgh*, March, Tuesday 8. This day I lost my way in the woods, and after riding ten miles out of my road, came to a hospitable tavern-keeper, who entertained me and my horse *gratis*. After some questions he observed, "I suppose you are one of the bishops who go about under the authority of the congress to ordain." I told him that I was one of those who lately ordained at *Baltimore*.

March, Wednesday 9. In my ride this morning to *Alexandria*, (*Virginia*) through the woods, I have had one of the most romantic scenes that ever I beheld. Yesterday there was a very heavy fall of snow and hail and sleet. The fall of sleet was so great, that the trees seemed to be trees of ice. So beautiful a sight of the kind I never saw before. At *Alexandria* I met with poor *John Shaw*, who lives with brother *Bushby*. I visited in this place General *Roberdeau*. He is not in society, but loves us most affectionately.

And now I am going to open a solemn scene indeed! May GOD deeply impress it on my heart. We had this day a very sudden thaw. I had two runs of water (as they are called) to cross between *Alexandria* and *Colchester*, which swell exceedingly on any thaw or fall of rain: but being earnestly desirous to get into my work, I determined to proceed on my journey. One of our friends sent me over the first run, and every body informed me, I could easily cross the second, if I crossed the first. When I came to the second, (which was perhaps two hours after I crossed the first) I found that I had two streams to pass. The first I went over without much danger: but in crossing the second, which was very strong, and very deep, I did not observe that a tree brought down by the flood, lay across the landing-place. I endeavoured, but in vain, (when I came to the tree) to drive my horse against the stream, and go round the tree. I was afraid to turn my horse's head to the stream, and afraid to go back. In this dilemma, I thought it most prudent for me to lay hold on the tree, and go over it, the water being shallow on the other side  
of

of the tree. But I did not advert to the danger of loosening the tree from its hold. For no sooner did I execute my purpose so far as to lay hold on the tree, (and that instant the horse was carried from under me) but the motion which I gave it, loosened it, and down the stream it instantly carried me. About fifteen yards, or twenty yards off, there grew up a tree in the middle of the stream, the root of which had formed a little bank or island, and divided the stream; and here the tree which I held, was stopped. Instantly there came down with the flood, a tree or large branch of a tree upon my back, which was so heavy, that I was afraid it would break my back. Here I was, jammed up for a considerable time, (a few minutes appeared long at such a time) expecting that my strength would soon be exhausted, and I should drop between the tree and the branch, and be drowned. Here I pleaded aloud with GOD in good earnest: one promise which I pleaded, I remember well, "Lo, I will be with you alway, even unto the end of the world." I felt no fear at all of the pain of dying, or of death itself, or of hell, and yet I found an unwillingness to die. It was an awful time! However, through the blessing of my Almighty Preserver, (to whom be all the glory!) I at last got my knee, which I long endeavoured at in vain, on the tree which I grasped, and then soon disengaged myself, and got upon the little bank. Here I panted for breath for some time; and when I recovered, perceiving the water between the little island and the shore not to be very deep, or very strong, I ventured through it, and got to land. I was now obliged to walk about a mile shivering, before I got to a house. The master and mistress were from home, and were not expected to return that night. But the principal negro lent me an old ragged shirt and coat, waistcoat, breeches, &c. and they made a large fire, and hung my clothes up to dry all night. Before bedtime, a man, who came to the run on a small horse, and perceived my horse near the brook, and concluded the rider was drowned; and wanted to cross the stream on urgent business, mounted my horse, and being well acquainted with



with the run, came over safe: and perceiving the footsteps of a person from the side of the water, he concluded it was the person to whom the horse belonged, and following the track, brought horse and bags all safe to me. As he was a poor man, I gave him half a guinea. The horse was the same easy, charming creature which Mrs. Gough lent me to go to *Philadelphia*. At night I lay on a bed on the ground, and my strength having been so exhausted slept soundly all the night. Thus was I wonderfully preserved, and I trust shall never forget that awful, but very instructive scene.

Thursday 10. I got to *Fredericksburg*, a very wicked, ungodly town.

Friday 11. I began now to find that I could say with the apostle, "I know how to *want*, and how to *abound*." For I had advanced so much money to pay for the minutes of the conference, the sermon on the Godhead of Christ, and the ordination sermon, and towards the binding of the prayer-books and travelling, that my finances were grown very low. This evening as I was travelling, I asked a man on the road, whether there was any inn near, and he told me there was, on the other side of the wood, and he was the landlord. I found him a decent man, who sometimes heard the Baptist ministers. I gave him some little books, and he gave me entertainment for myself and my horse *gratis*.

Saturday 12. In the afternoon, by inquiring at the plantations, I found out an old gentlewoman, (whose name I have forgot) who formerly received the preachers. But they have left that county (*King William*) on account of the little good they did there. Here I staid all night, although I had made but two-thirds of a day's journey. I believe it may be well to try the county once more, especially as the Baptists have now left it. This morning I called at a plantation to procure intelligence about the road. The mistress of the house perceived something in me, I suppose, of her own spirit, and desired me to alight. I found they were Baptists, and real seekers after salvation.

[To be continued.]

Pp

POETRY.

*Continued to Page 339*

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## Poetry.

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### *Part of the 104th Psalm Paraphrased.*

**U**PBORNE aloft on vent'rous wing,  
 While spurning earthly themes I soar  
 Thro' paths untrod before,  
 What GOD, what seraph shall I sing?  
 Whom but thee should I proclaim,  
 Author of this wond'rous frame!  
 Eternal, uncreated Lord,  
 Enshrin'd in glory's radiant blaze!  
 At whose prolific voice, whose potent word,  
 Commanded nothing swift retir'd, and worlds began their  
 race?

Thou, brooding o'er the realms of night,  
 Th' unbottom'd, infinite abyfs,  
 Bad'st the deep her rage surcease,  
 And said'st, Let there be light!  
 Æthereal light thy call obey'd,  
 Thro' the wide void her living waters past,  
 Glad she left her native shade,  
 Darkness turn'd his murmuring head,  
 Resign'd the reins, and trembling fled;  
 The chrystal waves roll'd on, and fill'd their ambient  
 waste.

In light, effulgent robe, array'd,  
 Thou left'st the beauteous realms of day,  
 The golden towers inclin'd their head,  
 As their sovereign took his way.

The all-incircling bounds (a shining train,  
 Ministering flames around him flew)  
 Thro' the vast profound he drew,  
 When, lo! sequacious to his fruitful hand,  
 Heaven o'er th' uncolour'd void her azure curtain threw,

Lo! marching o'er the empty space,  
 The fluid stores in order rise,  
 With adamant chains of liquid glass  
 To bind the new-born fabric to the skies,  
 Downward th' Almighty Builder rode,  
 Old chaos groan'd beneath the GOD,  
 Sable clouds his pompous car,  
 Harness'd winds before him ran,  
 Proud to wear their maker's chain,  
 And told with hoarse-responding voice him come from  
 far.

Embryon-earth the signal knew,  
 And rear'd from night's dark womb his infant head;  
 Tho' yet prevailing waves his hills o'erspread,  
 And stain'd their sickly face with pallid hue,  
 But when loud thunders the pursuit began,  
 Back the affrighted spoilers ran;  
 In vain aspiring hills oppos'd their chase,  
 O'er hills and vales with equal haste  
 The flying squadrons past,  
 Till safe within the walls of their appointed place;  
 There firmly fixt, their sure enclosures stand,  
 Unchangeable bounds of ever-during sand!  
 He spake; from the tall mountain's wounded side  
 Fresh springs roll'd down their silver tide:  
 O'er the glad vales the shining wonders stray,  
 Soft murmuring as they flow,  
 While in their cooling wave inclining low  
 The untaught natives of the field their parching thirst  
 allay.

High



High seated on the dancing sprays,  
 Checquering with varied light their parent-streams,  
 The feather'd quires attune their artless lays,  
 Safe from the dreaded heat of solar beams.

Genial show'rs at his command  
 Pour plenty o'er the barren land;  
 Labouring with parent-throes,  
 See the teeming hills disclose  
 A new birth: see cheerful green,  
 Transitory, pleasing scene,  
 O'er the smiling landskip glow,  
 And gladden all the vale below.  
 Along the mountain's craggy brow,  
 Amiably dreadful now,  
 See clasping vine disspread  
 Her gently rising, verdant head;  
 See the purple grape appear,  
 Kind relief of human care!

Instinct with circling life, thy skill  
 Uprear'd the olive's loaded bough,  
 What-time on *Lebanon's* proud hill  
 Slow rose the stately cedar's brow,  
 Nor less rejoice the lowly plains,  
 Of useful corn the fertile bed,  
 Than when the lordly cedar reigns,  
 As beauteous, but a barren shade;

While in his arms the painted train,  
 Warbling to the vocal grove,  
 Sweetly tell their pleasing pain,  
 Willing slaves to genial love.  
 While the wild goats, an active throng,  
 From rock to rock light-bounding fly,  
 Jehovah's praise in solemn song  
 Shall echo thro' the vaulted sky.

J. W.

*Vanity*

*Vanity of Life, Ecclesiastes i. 2.*

**T**HE evils that beset our path  
Who can prevent or cure?  
We stand upon the brink of death,  
When most we seem secure.

If we to-day sweet peace possess,  
It soon may be withdrawn;  
Some change may plunge us in distress  
Before to-morrow's dawn.

Disease and pain invade our health,  
And find an easy prey;  
And oft, when least expected, wealth  
Takes wings and flies away.

A fever or a blow can shake  
Our wisdom's boasted rule;  
And of the brightest genius make  
A madman or a fool.

The gourds, from which we look for fruit,  
Produce us only pain;  
A worm unseen attacks the root,  
And all our hopes are vain.

I pity those who seek no more,  
Than such a world can give;  
Wretched they are, and blind, and poor,  
And dying while they live.

Since sin has fill'd the earth with woe,  
And creatures fade and die;  
Lord, wean our hearts from things below,  
And fix our hopes on high.

## On FRIENDSHIP.

THE greatest blessing we can know,  
 The richest gift heav'n can bestow,  
 (Next to that celestial ray,  
 Which guides us to the realms of day,)  
 Is friendship's pure and steady flame,  
 For ever sacred be the name!  
 Let no unhallow'd lips pretend  
 To vilify the name of friend!  
 The holy sparks from heav'n were sent,  
 To favour'd mortals only lent;  
 And they shall never, never die,  
 But ripen in eternity.

## To a FRIEND.

WHEN here, *Eliza*, first I came,  
 Where *Ush* rolls on his silver stream,  
 What different thoughts usurp'd my breast,  
 From these which now ensure my rest;  
 Religion, with her radiant train,  
 Peace, joy, and love, does now maintain  
 Her rightful empire in my heart,  
 Since I have chose the better part.  
 'Tis now I live a happy life;  
 My passions now have ceas'd their strife;  
 Their current turn'd from earthly things,  
 They centre in the King of kings;  
 Where bliss alone is to be found,  
 Which only lives on hallow'd ground.  
 O! may thy friendly bosom prove  
 The sacred force of heav'nly love;  
 Then wilt thou soon be taught to know  
 The vanity of all below;  
 Then will thy happy soul aspire,  
 And sweetly catch seraphic fire;  
 With burning cherubim confess,  
 In GOD alone is happiness.

THE